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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, December 7, 1931.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Hints on Shopping." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Pork in Preferred Ways."

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Holiday shopping even in an economy year can be a tiresome, dragged out, day-after-day affair or an interesting and pleasant job, all depending on how you go at it. It's often the little things, haven't you noticed, that make it easy or tedious?

Take feet, for example. Feet have a considerable effect on a job like shopping at any time of year, but especially these days when stores are crowded and so much standing and walking is necessary. Treat your feet well and they'll repay you with good service and make shopping twice as pleasant. High heels may look stylish, but comfortable walking on this occasion wear shoes with low heels and sensible toes. A cold foot bath in the morning and a warm soap-and-water bath with a cold rinse at the end of the day's shopping helps keep feet in good condition. It may take a little extra time, but it pays in comfort. Fresh stockings every day and powder in shoes if your feet are inclined to perspire--these are other little things that help.

Now as to the business of shopping itself. Did I hear someone exclaim, "Why all my Christmas shopping is done already!" Good. Early shoppers always get their reward--and in this world too. It's more comfortable to shop early before the stores are crowded. And you can usually make a better job of it by starting far ahead of the season. The stores often offer attractive special values to encourage early shopping.

However, if the job is yet to be done, better to consider at the start that there are pleasant and efficient ways of doing it, and inefficient, tedious ways. You can start out in the morning and spend all day looking at the displays and wondering if this article will do for Susie and that for Aunt Jane. It's surprising how much time and effort anyone can waste who spends day after day at this aimless, haphazard kind of shopping. Of course, if you are merely out for recreation, why, that's different. But for a busy housekeeper whose time is limited, a well-planned shopping campaign is a labor saver.

My Next-Door Neighbor's system for Christmas purchasing always seemed to me an excellent one. First, she spends a morning going through the stores, just getting ideas and prices and jotting down any items that she wants to remember as gift possibilities. Then she goes home, works out an expense budget deciding roughly the amount she wants to spend and how she wants to divide it.

She makes a list of each member of the family and friends and by each name writes several gift possibilities. When next she goes shopping, she carries this list with her and follows it in making purchases instead of wandering aimlessly through the stores and buying hit-or-miss.

Oh, yes, and if you haven't done it already, this is a good time to stock up on wrapping paper, string, Christmas seals, and so forth. I have one thrifty friend who keeps a drawer in her closet just for Christmas left-overs--holiday ribbons, wrappings, cards, boxes, and seals that have been used once but are too good to throw away. These she saves and uses another year.

That's all about shopping today. There's a dinner to think of, Arabella, and I'm not a believer in neglecting meal plans. But you might like to know that this is really going to be shoppers' week on my schedule. For on Wednesday I'm planning to chat about books for the child's Christmas and Friday the subject is selecting Christmas toys.

Now about our dinner. Just for a change on this winter day the Menu Specialist thought you might like a spare-rib dinner--an old-time, thrifty, in-season meal.

Have you ever tried roast stuffed spareribs? If you have, you know how very good they are, especially if you serve them with sauerkraut and baked sweet-potatoes. As for a salad to go with the first course, well, what about a crisp, fresh, colorful vegetable salad--raw vegetables, you know, for vitamins? What about grated raw carrot and chopped celery salad on lettuce with cooked salad dressing?--Another inexpensive dish.

For dessert--let's see. Cranberries are in season these days. Very much so. A hot pudding would be good with this meal. I know--hot steamed cranberry pudding. The recipe is in your green radio recipe book. Look on page 93 for steamed cranberry pudding. There's a hot cranberry sauce to go with it. Look over the page on page 94. Right there at the top you'll see that excellent reddish, tart sauce to go over the pudding.

Now let's go over the menu once again. Roast stuffed spareribs; Sauerkraut; Baked sweetpotatoes; Grated raw carrot and chopped celery salad; and Steamed cranberry pudding.

Would you like the sparerib recipe? That's not in the cookbook but it is right where you would expect to find it--in the pork leaflet. Of course, you have a pork leaflet. For the benefit of any new listeners however, we might repeat a few facts about it. The real name of the pork leaflet is "Pork in Preferred Ways." And, as I've so often said before, you can have a copy of that or any of our other leaflets just by asking for them. Write to this station or write direct to the Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C.--the place where all these good free publications are prepared, stored and mailed out to all corners of the country. It sometimes takes several weeks to get the free publications out to you, but I promise that if you write me for a pork leaflet you'll surely get one in time.

For those whose leaflets haven't come yet, I'm going to give the stuffed sparerib recipe right now. It's a rather long recipe so I hope you are well equipped with pencils and plenty of notebook paper. First let's take down the ingredients. There are ten.

2 sections of spareribs
1 cup of fine dry bread crumbs
1/4 cup of diced salt pork
1/2 cup of celery
1/2 cup of chopped onion
1/4 cup of chopped parsley
5 tart apples, diced
1/2 cup of sugar
3/4 teaspoon of salt, and
1/8 teaspoon of pepper

That's quite a long list isn't it? Let's go over it again. (Repeat.)

When you go marketing for your meat, select well-fleshed rib sections that match. Have the butcher crack the breastbone so that it will be easy to carve between the ribs. Wipe the meat with a damp cloth.

Now prepare the stuffing this way: Fry the salt pork until crisp and remove the pieces from the skillet. Cook the celery, onion, and parsley in the fat for a few minutes and remove them. Put the apples into the skillet and sprinkle them with sugar. Cover the skillet and cook them until tender. Then remove the lid and continue to cook until the juice evaporates and the pieces of apple are candied. Mix with the apples the bread crumbs, crisp salt pork, cooked vegetables, salt and pepper. Lay one section of the ribs out flat, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and spread with the hot stuffing. Cover with the other section and sew the two together. Sprinkle the outside with salt and pepper and rub with flour. Lay the stuffed ribs on a rack in an open roasting pan and sear in a hot oven (480 degrees F.) for 20 minutes--or until the meat is lightly browned. Reduce the oven temperature rapidly to very moderate heat (300 to 325 degrees) and continue to cook about an hour longer, or until the meat is tender.

Take off the strings before serving. And serve the stuffed spareribs on a hot platter.

There's a picture of spareribs prepared this way and all ready to go to the dining room table on the last page of the pork leaflet.

Tuesday: "Popcorn and Raisins."

